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(54) **Process for cleaning surgical needles**

(57) A process for cleaning surfaces of a metal alloy surgical needle or a metal alloy surgical instrument. The process consists of exposing the surfaces of a metal al-

loy surgical needle or surgical instrument to a gaseous plasma for a sufficient amount of time to effectively clean the surfaces of the needle or instrument.

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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EP 97 30 2091

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	US 4 976 920 A (JACOB ADIR) * column 1, line 19-33 * * column 2, line 33-51 * * column 5, line 60 - column 6, line 40 * * column 7, line 17-25 * * column 14, line 20-43 * * column 17; example 6 * ---	1-11	A61B17/06 A61B19/00 A61M5/00 A61L2/14 B08B7/00
X	EP 0 377 799 A (TECHNICS PLASMA GMBH) * column 1, line 1-9 * * column 1, line 49 - column 2, line 19 * * claims 3,6 * ---	1-4,8-11	
A	DE 42 28 551 A (LINDE AG) * column 1, line 3-6 * * column 1, line 49-62 * * column 2, line 47-49 * -----	1-11	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			A61B C23C A61M A61L B08B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 27 November 1997	Examiner Joffreau, P-0
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons 3 : member of the same patent family, corresponding document X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document	

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